



BS"D

To: parsha@parsha.net
From: cshulman@gmail.com

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON ACHRON SHEL PESACH - 5778

In our 23rd year! To receive this parsha sheet, go to <http://www.parsha.net> and click Subscribe or send a blank e-mail to parsha-subscribe@yahoo.com. Please also copy me at cshulman@gmail.com. A complete archive of previous issues is now available at <http://www.parsha.net>. It is also fully searchable.

Sponsored anonymously in memory of
Chaim Yissachar z"l ben Yechiel Zaydel Dov

To sponsor a parsha sheet (proceeds to tzedaka)
contact cshulman@parsha.net

DON'T FORGET ERUV TAVSHILIN

**OMER TONIGHT (THURSDAY NIGHT) IS 6TH DAY
OF OMER; FRIDAY NIGHT WILL BE 7TH DAY –**
**Memory device – The 6th day of the omer will be
Friday the 6th day of the week, the 6th day of April and
daf 6 of Horiyos for daf yomi!**

Daily Halacha return@email.dailyhalacha.com
Apr 4 (1 day ago)

The Rabbi Jacob S. Kassin Memorial Halacha Series
Authored by **Rabbi Eli J. Mansour** (4/4/2018)

Description: **Passover- Eruv Tavshilin**

When Yom Tov falls on Friday, Halacha forbids cooking or making any preparations on that day for Shabbat, unless one follows the procedure known as "Eruv Tavshilin." The Eruv Tavshilin is made on Erev Yom Tov; thus, if Yom Tov falls on Friday and Shabbat, one would make the Eruv Tavshilin on Thursday, before the onset of Yom Tov. One takes a Ke'zayit (the volume of an olive) of bread – or, on Pesach, Matza – together with a cooked food – our practice is to use an egg – and sets them aside. He then makes the formal declaration stating that through this Eruv it will be permitted to cook, bake and make any preparations necessary on Yom Tov for Shabbat. Without making an Eruv Tavshilin, one may not prepare on Yom Tov for Shabbat.

Hacham Ovadia Yosef ZT"L writes that even if one did make an Eruv Tavshilin, he should preferably not cook and prepare for Shabbat late in the day on Yom Tov, shortly before the onset of Shabbat. He should endeavor to prepare the food early enough in the day that it could potentially be served to guests who arrive while it is still Yom Tov, before Shabbat. This is an additional measure of stringency; if one cooked food late in the day on Yom Tov, the food is nevertheless permissible for consumption on Shabbat. Preferably, however, one should prepare food earlier in the day.

Summary: When Yom Tov falls on Shabbat, one must make an Eruv Tavshilin on Erev Yom Tov to allow preparing on Yom Tov for Shabbat. Even if one did make an Eruv Tavshilin, he should preferably not prepare food for Shabbat late in the day on Friday.

from: **Rabbi Yissocher Frand** <ryfrand@torah.org>
to: ravfrand@torah.org
date: Wed, Apr 4, 2018 at 10:36 PM
Rabbi Frand on Pesach

This dvar Torah was adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tapes on the weekly Torah portion: Tape #322, A Unique Erev Pessach and Its Broader Implications.
Good Shabbos!

Next Year In Jerusalem – If: The Symbolism of the “Two Dippings”

Every Passover Seder begins with a plea: “This year we are here; next year (may we be) in the Land of Israel. This year we are slaves; next year (may we be) free!” Every Seder that we have ever experienced is just a shadow of the ideal Pesach Seder. A proper Pesach Seder should include the Paschal and Festival offerings. But “this year” it is not that way.

The truth of the matter is that the Pesach Seder also ends with this same theme. “Next year in Jerusalem.” The reason why our Pesach Seder will not include a Paschal offering this year is because the Bais HaMikdash [Temple] was destroyed. Our Sages teach us that the Second Temple was destroyed because of ‘Gratuitous Hatred’ (Sinat Chinam). We are taught that the Bais HaMikdash will not be rebuilt until we somehow correct the defect of Sinat Chinam and divisiveness.

If that is the case, why are we not prompted somewhere during the Pesach Seder to address this sin of Sinat Chinam? If the Seder in fact includes the request that next year we should be in the Land of Israel and in Jerusalem, why are we not told exactly how to take corrective action to make that happen? We should be explicitly taught to remedy our behavior of Gratuitous Hatred.

The Ben Ish Chai states that there is such a notion in the Hagaddah. He says that this is alluded to by the question – “Why is it that on all other nights we do not even dip once, and on this night we dip twice?”

The Ben Ish Chai suggests that the first dipping on the night of the Seder (into the salt water) reminds us of the first place that “dipping” is mentioned in Jewish History: “And they dipped (Yoseph's) coat into blood” [Bereshis 37:31]. This is the prototype of the sin of Gratuitous Hatred, which has plagued us throughout the generations.

The second dipping at the Seder (into the Charoses) corresponds to a second dipping that we find mentioned in the Chumash: “And you shall take the bundle of hyssop and dip it into the blood” [Shmos 12:22]. This pasuk [verse] refers to the dipping into the blood of the Paschal offering. That dipping was the first step of painting the door posts and lintels of their homes with the sign of blood — in order to save them from the Plague of the First Born on the night of their deliverance from Egypt.

It is no coincidence, says the Ben Ish Chai, that the Torah uses the language of Agudah [bundle (of hyssop)] regarding the second dipping. The word Agudah comes from the root word Igud, which means unity. Thus, the dipping of unity, which took place at the end of the Jewish Nation's stay in Egypt, was a remedy for the dipping of Gratuitous Hatred, which had triggered their descent into Egypt.

This concept symbolizes that we too will emerge from our current exile — which was also triggered by Gratuitous Hatred — with unity and harmony amongst ourselves.

Rav Elchanan Wasserman expressed amazement that of all the slanders that the anti-Semites have used against the Jews over the centuries, one of the most recurrent lies has been the ‘Blood Libel’. This is a claim that is not only patently false, but that makes absolutely no sense as well.

The last thing a Jew would ever eat is blood. The Torah has numerous prohibitions distancing a Jew from blood or anything that is mixed with blood. How could it be that we have always been accused of this specific charge?

Rav Elchanan Wasserman suggests that this is a Divine punishment that corresponds to the sin of “they dipped (Yoseph’s) coat into blood”. When the brothers dipped Yoseph’s coat into blood, that did something to the system of Heavenly Justice which caused Jews in future generations to be susceptible to the slanderous libel that we bake our Matzahs with the blood of Gentile children.

Unfortunately, Pesach has many reminders of Gratuitous Hatred. Rav Mattisyahu Solomon points out the irony that the Blood Libel always emerged before Pesach. (The libel claimed that the Matzahs were baked with blood; the 4 cups of wine actually contained blood, etc.) Why specifically Pesach? Why did they not say that we dip our Lulavim (palm branches, used on Sukkos) in blood?

The answer is because Pesach is the Festival of Redemption. It is the holiday of “In Nissan they were redeemed and in Nissan they are destined to be redeemed” [Rosh Hashanna 11a]. As long as we have not rectified the original sin that led to the slavery — Yosef’s brothers Gratuitous Hatred, which caused them to dip his coat in blood, the blood libel rears its ugly head around the time of Pesach.

In fact, the first night of Pesach always falls on the same day of the week as the night of the following Tisha B’Av. The Ramo”h in Shulchan Aruch traces the custom of dipping an egg in salt water on the night of the Seder to this phenomenon of the calendar. We dip an egg — which is sign of mourning — at the Seder to commemorate Tisha B’Av and the destruction of the Bais HaMikdash. Why is this theme linked to Pesach?

The answer is that if 5 months from now we will commemorate another Tisha B’Av, it is because we did not properly learn the lesson of Pesach. We forget the lesson of the “two dippings”. We can only remedy the sin of Gratuitous Hatred, symbolized by the dipping in salt water, through the unity symbolized by the bundle of hyssop.

There are many reminders of the connection between Destruction and Redemption. The way that we can emerge from the Destruction that we are experiencing, and merit the Redemption that we so desperately need, is by once and for all remedying “dipping (Yoseph’s coat) into blood” by creating its antidote of “dipping with the bundle of hyssop – through one common bundle of unity.”

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington. Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Yerushalayim.

from: Aish.com <newsletterserver@aish.com> via em.secureserver.net
date: Tue, Apr 3, 2018 at 4:30 PM
subject: Advanced Parsha - Passover (7th day)

Between the Lines - Mystical Insights - by Rabbi Abba Wagensberg

Passover (seventh day)(Exodus 13:17-15:26)

The Essential Bones of Joseph

Greetings from the holy city of Jerusalem!

This week, as there is no regular Torah reading, we will discuss the seventh day of Passover, known in Hebrew as "Shevi'i shel Pesach."

Historically, this day celebrates the Jewish people's crossing of the Red Sea, and every year, it corresponds to the sixth day of the Omer. The sefirah, or Kabbalistic energy, of this sixth day is called "yesod she'b'chesed" - literally, "foundation of kindness." (Chesed - kindness - is the energy of the whole first week of the Omer, and each day expresses a different aspect of it.) What is the connection between the sefirah of the day and the event it commemorates?

The verse dramatically describes the crossing of the Sea as, "The ocean saw and fled" (Psalms 114:3). The Midrash (Bereishit Raba 87:1) wonders what exactly the ocean saw that caused it to split. The Midrash answers, "[It saw] the bones of Yosef." Yosef is known throughout Jewish writings as "Yosef the Tzaddik." We are taught (Proverbs 10:25) that "A tzaddik is the foundation (yesod) of the world." If a tzaddik is the foundation of the world, and Yosef is called "Yosef the Tzaddik," Yosef is therefore associated with

the quality of foundation (yesod). We noted above that the sefirah of the seventh day of Passover is called YESOD she'b'chesed. We can connect all these ideas if we understand that in the merit of YESOD (Yosef), God performed the great CHESSED (kindness) of splitting the Sea for us.

But one question still remains. What was it about Yosef that caused the Sea to split in his merit?

We could suggest that Yosef's fundamental strength was his ability to counteract nature. When Yosef was 17 years old, working as a servant in Egypt, his master Potiphar's wife repeatedly tried to seduce him. Through tremendous effort (described in Sotah 36b), Yosef managed to withstand this temptation. According to the natural way of the world, it would have been impossible for a 17-year-old boy to reject the persistent advances of an attractive woman. Yet Yosef went against the natural order and prevented himself from succumbing. Thus, it was in the merit of Yosef, who counteracted nature, that God counteracted nature when He split the Sea for the Jewish people.

We might still have another question. The Midrash explained that the Sea fled after seeing Yosef's bones. But the Talmud teaches (Baba Batra 17a) that the bodies of righteous people do not decay after death! The phrase "Yosef's bones" (in Hebrew, "atzmot Yosef") certainly seems to imply that Yosef's body decayed! How can we resolve this difficulty?

The word "etzem" (bone) in Hebrew also means "essence." We could therefore suggest that the phrase "atzmot Yosef" (Yosef's bones) in the Midrash is also hinting to "atz'miut Yosef" (Yosef's essence).

This interpretation will deepen our understanding of the verse (Exodus 13:19) where we learn that Moses took "atzmot Yosef" with him before the Jews left Egypt. Although Moses literally carried Yosef's remains out of Egypt, he also took along Yosef's essence: the willingness to break nature in order to carry out God's will. Moses, as the leader of the nation, represented the attitude of the Jewish people as a whole, who were prepared to counteract nature if the situation required. Thus, we can understand the verse, "The ocean saw and fled," to mean that not only was Yosef's essence revealed at the splitting of the Sea, but that Yosef's ability to go against nature was also manifest in Moses and in the entire Jewish people.

The verse (Psalms 80:2) tells us, "God leads His flock, Yosef." We see from here that God's flock - the Jewish people - are called "Yosef." When we reflect the attitude that Yosef stood for, we are all called Yosefites.

This year, on the seventh day of Passover, may we begin to understand what it means to represent Yosef the Tzaddik. May we cultivate a willingness to change ourselves even when it is not the natural or comfortable or easy thing to do, and in that merit, may all the seas of challenge in the world split before us, speedily in our days.

https://www.chabad.org/therebbe/article_cdo/aid/2601743/jewish/Acharon-Shel-Pesach-5739-1979.htm

Acharon Shel Pesach, 5739 (1979)

Free translation from the talks of the

Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

Motzaei Shabbos Parshas Shemini, Shabbos Mevorchim Iyar, 5739 (1979)

1. [The Baal Shem Tov initiated the custom of eating a meal immediately before sunset on Acharon Shel Pesach. He called this meal Moshiaich's Seudah (The Feast of Moshiaich) and explained that through participating in this meal we are able to appreciate a glimmer of the Messianic age.]

The full significance of Acharon Shel Pesach (the last day of Pesach) was only revealed recently, in our generation. Until then, the custom of celebrating Moshiaich's Seudah was unknown to the general public. It is appropriate to connect the two together since Acharon Shel Pesach marks the conclusion and, according to the principle “always proceed higher in holy matters,” the peak of the Pesach festival.

The prominence of Acharon Shel Pesach can be understood through analysis of the Torah's reference to the seventh day of Pesach. (Trans. note: According to the Rabbinic injunction that Jews in the Diaspora celebrate each

festival for two days. Acharon Shel Pesach is a continuation of the seventh day of Pesach.) We are told that it is “a day of assembly unto G-d” and therefore “do not do any work.” Other holidays are described as “a day of assembly for you.” The Talmud explains that since we have two conflicting verses (one, “unto G-d” and the other “for you”) it is proper to divide the holiday evenly, half to G-d, and half for ourselves. Also, in general though work is prohibited on Yom Tov, certain categories of work, e.g. the preparation of food is permitted. These laws apply on the seventh day of Pesach as well. However, since the Torah specifically refers to the seventh day of Pesach as “a day of assembly unto G-d” and states “Do not do any work,” it is obvious that the spiritual aspects of the holiday are stressed more emphatically then, than on other festivals.¹

Acharon Shel Pesach possesses the same qualities. In Likkutei Torah, the Alter Rebbe explains that the second day of a holiday is an extension of the first, instituted because the G-dly light that shines is too powerful to be contained in only one day.² In fact, the second day is on a higher level than the first as can be seen from the principle “always proceed in holy matters.”

2. Acharon Shel Pesach concludes the Pesach holiday, the festival of freedom. An intrinsic connection exists between freedom and happiness. A slave can never experience real joy.³

However, there exist two levels of happiness: The first is achieved by attaining freedom from slavery. The second has no connection with slavery. It is the true happiness that comes from total freedom.⁴ Each level has an advantage. In the first, the recollection of slavery’s bitterness makes you appreciate freedom more. To illustrate this concept, Chassidus often brings the example of the joy felt by the king’s son who has been released from prison and can once again see his father.⁵ Nevertheless, in the second stage your simcha is complete. In the first, the taste of slavery remains. As long as its memory persists you can never experience true freedom and true joy.

These two categories define the difference between the seventh and the final day of Pesach.⁶ The seventh day is the continuation and culmination of the six preceding days. It concludes an entire week of Pesach. On the contrary, the fact that it is called “Acharon Shel Pesach” (the last day of Pesach) instead of the eighth day shows that it is placed in a different category. The seventh day continues and completes the process of Exodus from Egypt. The final day celebrates a level of freedom not at all connected with Egypt and slavery.

Therefore, Moshiach’s Seudah is celebrated on the final day. In Moshiach’s Seudah, we taste the revelations of Messianic times.⁷

We sense a glimmer of how it will feel when the entire concept of Golus will be totally wiped away. Acharon Shel Pesach possesses this same quality, representing the state of total freedom with no connection to slavery.

3. The celebration of every holiday is not intended to be a one time event, but rather to teach lessons which will effect the totality of our service to G-d. Likewise, we should not regard the concept mentioned above as exclusive to Acharon Shel Pesach but practically applicable in our daily observance of Torah and Mitzvos.

Torah and Mitzvos bring about true freedom, as the Mishnah says “The only free man is he who is involved in the study of Torah.”

What is the rationale behind that statement? How does Torah make us free? The answer to that question relates to the essential nature of Torah. Torah is G-d’s wisdom and will. It existed before the world and even now, after the world’s creation, it transcends worldly limitations. Likewise, a student of Torah achieves a state of oneness with his subject matter and rises above the world’s finite boundaries.

The same applies to Mitzvos. The fundamental principle behind Mitzvos is “You are my servants and not servants to servants.” By following G-d’s commands, a Jew expresses his obedience to G-d’s will and not to the dictates of the world. Furthermore, the Talmud states: “The servant of a King is like the King.” He becomes the controller of his environment. All the restrictions placed upon him including those of “the laws of his country”

which Torah says must be accepted as “your law” do not apply if they run contrary to Torah.⁸

The two levels of freedom described above apply in this case. On the first level, he feels the pressure of the slavery of the world, and fights against it. On the second level, he does not at all feel the presence of the world.⁹ The ultimate goal of Torah is to bring about full freedom. In the first stages of service, we have to work on breaking our nature and our ties to the worldly desires. However, the necessity for such service itself shows that we have not attained a full level of Torah experience. Only when there is no trace of connection to material desires left can our Torah service be complete.¹⁰

On a practical basis, each one of us can attain (at least to some degree) the second level described above. It has been mentioned on a number of occasions while a Jew is studying Torah, he must stand above and disregard all worldly matters. Just as on Shabbos, he forgets his material concerns and would not pick up a telephone, etc., similarly when learning, his studies dominate his total attention;¹¹ if the telephone rings he does not answer it, his mind is focused on Torah alone.

4. In previous generations, Acharon Shel Pesach was also connected with the coming of Moshiach. This is obvious from the Haftarah which elaborates on various details of the Messianic age. However, by instituting Moshiach’s Seudah, the Baal Shem Tov¹² added a new dimension. Moshiach is appreciated not only in speech and in Torah, but also connected with physical activity, assimilated into our system, becoming part of our flesh and blood.

The question may arise: What is the difference between eating Matzoh now in Moshiach’s Seudah and eating it during the previous days of Pesach. We are told that when we eat Matzoh (not necessarily during Moshiach’s Seudah) we must realize that “we are eating G-dliness.”

The difference between the two can be compared to the two different stages of the Messianic era (see footnote F). In the first stage, traces of Golus will remain. Only in the second stage will all remnants of any influences contrary to Torah disappear. Moshiach’s Seudah gives us a taste of such a perspective, and furthermore, endows us with the potential to perpetuate that state throughout the entire year. This meal gives us the potential to rise above Golus even now, to overcome all the disturbing influences that may effect our Torah observance.

Practically speaking; Acharon Shel Pesach reminds us that during Torah study it is required — and within the capacity — of every Jew to completely disassociate himself from the world around him. Even though before learning we may have had other involvements, while learning, only the Torah we are studying should fill our minds. Why is this so? As mentioned above, Torah existed before the world. The Rambam states “This is the Torah, it will not be changed.” Just as before creation Torah was not effected by worldly influences, the same still applies even after creation. Esoterically; in the spiritual order, the source of Torah precedes that of the world, hence Torah is above worldly limitations. “Study leads to deed,” it is therefore understood that if our Torah study is unaffected by worldly influences, our deeds will be on a similar level. Acharon Shel Pesach teaches us to have a Shabbos¹³ mentality throughout the year. Likewise, it prepares us for the day which will be “Shabbos and rest forever” with the coming of Moshiach.

May the influence of Moshiach’s Seudah be reflected in our daily service of Torah and Mitzvos. May that service be filled with joy and pleasure until it reaches an unbounded simcha.¹⁴

* * *

5. Moshiach’s Seudah is the third meal eaten on Acharon Shel Pesach. It parallels Seudah Shlishis, the third meal eaten on Shabbos. Shabbos contains three different levels: 1) rest directly after work as it says in Koheles, “a worker enjoys a sweet sleep.” His rest washes away all traces of fatigue and effort. This is the level of the Friday night meal. 2) The rest that stems from the knowledge that there is no need to work as the Talmud says “Sleep on Shabbos is a pleasure.” This is the level of the Shabbos day meal. 3) The

“day which is all Shabbos and rest.” This is the level of Seudah Shlishis, the highest level of Shabbos.

Kabbalah explains that Seudah Shlishis reflects the state of the world in Messianic times. This statement helps explain a Chassidic custom. The previous Rebbeim were careful to eat Seudah Shlishis, but they did not eat a full meal as in the case of the previous two. Rather, they would eat something light,¹⁵ fruit or cake (Some Chassidim were careful not to eat at all¹⁶).

This behavior relates closely to Acharon Shel Pesach. As explained above, there also, the emphasis is placed on the holiday’s spiritual aspects, it is “an assembly unto G- d.” However, three meals, including Moshiach’s Seudah are eaten!

What’s the motivating principle operating in both cases? An argument exists between the two Jewish sages, the Rambam and the Ramban about the nature of the life in Messianic times. The Rambam holds that souls will live without bodies. The Ramban maintains that souls will be encloded, as they are now, in bodies. As a proof he cites the Talmudic statement: “In Messianic times, there will be no eating and drinking.” If souls will exist without bodies, what is the necessity for the Talmud to tell us they won’t eat or drink? That fact would be understood without any explanation. Therefore, his opinion, and also that of Kabbalah and Chassidus is that also bodies will exist then.

However, the Ramban’s opinion arouses two basic questions: 1) The soul’s powers are more revealed when they are not contained within a body. Why then, in Messianic times, when the world will reach its ultimate state of completion, will they be subject to those restraints? 2) Why will the body possess a digestive system? Since man in his state of ultimate perfection will not eat, why will he need one?

Chassidus answers these questions explaining that the body possesses a spark of G- dliness higher than that of the soul. This level is not revealed now, but will be, in Messianic times. However, even then the body will not be able to reveal it by itself, rather it will need the soul as an intermediary. In that way, the body will nourish the soul even then.

From the above, we see that even the highest revelations of Messianic times will be connected with physicality. This parallels the concept that G- d wants “a dwelling place (i.e. a place to reveal His essence) in the lower worlds.” Similarly, through eating at the time of Seudah Shlishis and Moshiach’s Seudah we connect them with the physical world. In this manner, we create “a dwelling place” for G- d on the material plane.

This insight contributes to the lessons mentioned above. Before, we stressed the necessity for total dedication to Torah with complete disregard for the material world. It is possible to think that Torah asks us to sever all ties with physicality. Moshiach’s Seudah teaches us that even on the physical plane we must create an awareness of G- d. The Alter Rebbe explained a similar concept speaking in reference to prayer. “Your heart must be focused above and your eyes below.” Even during the sublime spiritual experience of Tefillah it is necessary to maintain a connection and a point of relation to the physical world.

The Talmud states: “there is no happiness without wine.” Therefore, Moshiach’s Seudah involves drinking wine which produces physical joy. This happiness enables the body to experience full spiritual freedom and an awareness of Moshiach, even in a material world and while still in Golus.

In the future redemption not one Jew will be left in Golus. Therefore, as a preparation, it is necessary to encourage all Jews to participate in Moshiach’s Seudah and in that way hasten his coming. May we merit it speedily in our days.

6. When a Jew fulfills the injunction “place G- d constantly before you” he has the ability to sense G- d’s presence at all times and in all places. Furthermore, since the Jews are “believers, descendents of believers” this service cannot be considered difficult. This inner potential is reinforced by history, which shows that those Jews who departed from a Torah life-style

were, sooner or later, swallowed up by their environment. No trace of their Yiddishkeit remained.¹⁷ Furthermore, when they turned their backs on Torah, they forfeited not only their place in the Jewish community but also (though not always immediately) their respect and position in secular society. The Gentiles never forgot that they were Jews and therefore could not respect him. How could they? They knew that each Jew’s ancestors sacrificed their lives for Yiddishkeit.¹⁸ Based on knowledge, how would they have to regard someone who has sacrificed all that, in an attempt to gain more honor and position in the secular world and given vent to his animal desires. Even a Gentile will not respect one who makes such a choice. On the other hand, he will feel true respect for a Jew who dedicates his life to Torah. Nevertheless, in order to make our choice easier, G- d sometimes shows us the example of a large community of Jews who have returned to Yiddishkeit and have accepted it fully, without any traces of a pick and choose attitude.

In view of this, it is fitting to congratulate the group which has come here from France. That country was far removed from Torah observance. Yet in recent years, hundreds of men, women, and children in France have returned to a Torah life-style. The previous Rebbeim always considered France as the epitome of counter-Torah forces. Yet now it has produced youth who study Torah (revealed and esoteric), perform Mitzvos and even dedicate themselves to self-development through prayer.

Their activities will help other Jews in their Torah service, since every Mitzvah performed by a Jew affects the entire Jewish people.¹⁹ The Messianic redemption will not leave one Jew in Golus. After each Jew experiences his individual redemption, together as a people we will experience the full redemption with the coming of Moshiach.

7. G- d operates in two ways. Sometimes, He works through grace and mercy to bring Jews closer to Torah and Mitzvos. Other times He works through the opposite attributes and leads Jews to Torah and Mitzvos through harsh and severe experiences.

Torah study is most successful away from home, as our sages commented “Seek exile in a place of Torah.” At home, a person can never fully divorce himself from his habitual way of life. However, when he “goes into exile” and moves away from home, into a Torah environment, his Torah study and practice can flourish and grow. There his habitual pattern is broken and he is open for a full commitment to Torah.

This is the proper approach to study Torah. Everyone should follow this pattern. However, there are times when G- d sees that people have not willingly responded to the opportunity He provided, and forces them into such a decision in order to bring them to full observance of Torah and Mitzvos.

These remarks are directed to the students from Persia. There, Jewish observance is not on a high level. A number of attempts were made to develop Yiddishkeit there. However, they did not meet with full success. Since G- d wanted these children to fulfill Torah and Mitzvos fully, He sent them “into exile” in a Torah environment. Whether they realize it or not, “G- d controlled their footsteps” and directed them here.

Many questions have been asked about the dramatic turnabout in Persia. How could such a radical change happen so fast? People forgot that thousands of years ago similar events happened on Purim. At that time also, the entire political situation was reversed in a brief time.

The Megillah devotes many verses to the description of Achashverosh’s wealth, the feasts he made, his wife, etc. Since the purpose of the Megillah was to describe the Purim miracle alone, why was it necessary to spend so much time on background information? The Megillah’s intent, however, is to teach us that everything in Achashverosh’s 127 provinces, all of his riches, etc., existed for only one purpose, to help bring about the Purim miracle and the strengthening of Yiddishkeit that accompanied it.²⁰

Similarly today, if we see a revolution in the world, it is a sign that we must bring about a revolution in ourselves and strengthen our commitment to Torah and Mitzvos.

Trans. note: At this point the Rebbe Shlita congratulated all those who had worked with the Persians in the past and gave them encouragement for their work in the future.

8. It is proper at this time to mention Mivtza Chinuch and stress the importance of working to enroll children in Torah camps. Camp is a 24 hour experience. It is able to educate a child and motivate him to greater Torah commitment and observance. Many times, a summer in a camp has influenced a non-religious child to bring his entire family closer to Yiddishkeit.

Likewise, it is proper to mention the other Mivtzoim: Mivtza Ahavas Yisroel, Mivtza Torah, Mivtza Tefillin, Mivtza Mezuzah, Mivtza Bayis Maley Seforim, Mivtza Tzedakah, and also the three Mivtzoim especially related to women (intrinsicly connected to Pesach as our sages say: "Through the merit of righteous women we were redeemed from Egypt.") Mivtza Neiros Shabbos Kodesh, Mivtza Kashrus, and Mivtza Taharas HaMishpocha.

<http://www.yutorah.org/lectures/lecture.cfm/743886/rabbi-dovid-gottlieb/achron-shel-pesach-hashem-s-beloved-children/>

Achron Shel Pesach: Hashem's Beloved Children

Ask author **Rabbi Dovid Gottlieb**

Mar 31, 2010

The incredible and unpredictable story of baby Moshe's survival is familiar to one and all. The love of his parents, the dedication of his sister, and the kindness of the Egyptian princess - all choreographed, of course, by the invisible hand of Hashem - coalesced to enable Moshe to escape Pharaoh's murderous decree.

But the dramatic account of Moshe's rescue raises the question about the fate of the other baby boys. Surely some of them were tragically killed, but there is no indication that an entire generation was wiped out. On the contrary, in many places Chazal refer to "Doro Shel Moshe," the "Generation of Moshe." But where did these contemporaries come from? Obviously they weren't all raised in the royal palace, so the question remains, how did these babies survive?

The Torah text is silent but the Midrash (Shemos Rabbah 23:8) fills in this lacuna.

The Midrash recounts that to avoid the Egyptian death squads, Jewish women gave birth under the protective cover of the forest. However, if the baby was a boy they had no choice but to abandon their newborn sons but not before they offered a poignant and powerful prayer:

"Ribbon HaOlam," they cried out to Hashem, "ani asisi es sheli, ve'atah ashe es shelcha," I did what I had to do; now You - please - do Your part.

After offering that tefillah the mothers returned to their homes without knowing what would come of their beloved sons.

Once the mothers departed, the Midrash continues, HaKadosh Baruch Hu Himself, as it were, cut the umbilical cord, bathed, and anointed the babies with precious oil. And then HaKadosh Baruch Hu gave each child two rocks, "echad maniko shemen v'echad maniko devash," one which yielded oil and another which supplied the baby with honey.

Safely hidden in the forest and with their sustenance now miraculously provided for, the babies - unbeknownst to the parents or anyone else - grew into young boys. Once they were old enough to "age out" of Pharaoh's decrees the boys returned to their respective homes.

One can only imagine the overwhelming shock and joy in each household as they witnessed a form of "techias ha-meisim," as children they had given up for dead now, years later, walked into their homes and back into their lives.

"How did you survive?" they asked. "Who took care of you?" the parents wondered. The Midrash records that young men explained that they had been cared for by a "bachur na'eh u-meshubach," apparently Hashem appeared in the form of a handsome and kind young man while providing for these boys.

Upon witnessing God's revealed presence during the splitting of the Yam Suf, the Midrash continues, these very children turned to their parents and excitedly told them, "ze'hu oso she'asah lanu kol osan ha-devarim k'shehayinu be'Mitzrayim," this is the one! He is the one who took care of us all those years ago in Egypt!

The revealed image of God on the banks of the Yam Suf was identical to the image of the young man who had cared for the children while they were in the forest. For years the boys and their families had thought that a kind stranger had provided their sustenance and only now, at this auspicious moment, did they finally realize that it was the Ribbono Shel Olam who had so lovingly cared for them all along. With this clarity and newfound understanding, the Midrash concludes, they joyously called out, "zeh keli v'anvehu," this is our God! This is who was with us even when we didn't realize it. "This is my God and I will beautify him" (Shemos 15:2).

What an amazing Midrash!

The Sefas Emes (Pesach 5638, "Hefresh HaGeulah") suggests, somewhat cryptically, that at the moment of Yetzias Mitzrayim, when we left Egypt, we became "Avdei Hashem," servants of God, but at Kerias Yam Suf, when He split the sea for us, we became "Banim Le'Hashem," the children of God.

The simple understanding of the Sefas Emes clearly points to a progression in our relationship with Hashem. Initially we were merely servants but, eventually, we reached the higher level of children.

But perhaps we can suggest, based on the above Midrash, a deeper understanding.

The events that took place from the time when the Jewish people left Egypt until they were safely across the sea didn't transform our relationship with Hashem; rather, it revealed the true nature of that relationship. There was no progression. We were always "banim," we just didn't realize it until Kerias Yam Suf. Just like we thought it was a "bachur na'eh u-meshubach" and, in fact, it had always been "zeh keli," so too, we thought we were just "avadim" when in truth we were always "banim."

Throughout the generations our Pesach celebration marks this revelation. On the first day(s) we acknowledge and are thankful to Hashem for taking us out of Egypt. But on the last day(s), we truly appreciate all that He has done and was always doing for us. On "Achron Shel Pesach" we discover who we really are and always were - "Banim Le'Hashem," His beloved and special children!

Rav Kook Torah

Passover: Next Year in Jerusalem

Chanan Morrison

(ravkooktorah.org/NEXT-YEAR-JERUSALEM.htm)

When Rav Kook visited the United States in 1924, scores of people came to see and meet him. The purpose of his trip, however, was to raise funds for Torah institutions in Eretz Yisrael and Europe.

The Philanthropist's Question

At one gathering in Rav Kook's honor, a well-known philanthropist agreed to give a very sizable donation to the cause, but only if the chief rabbi could explain to him a Jewish custom that he found puzzling.

At the conclusion of both the Seder night and Yom Kippur, Jews all over the world declare their heartfelt wish — "Next year in Jerusalem!"

'I understand why Jews in the Diaspora say this,' said the man. 'But why do Jews who live in Holy City say it? Are they not already there?'

The Jerusalemites' Prayer

The Rav listened attentively to the question and answered genially. 'The matter is quite simple, my friend,' he explained. 'First of all, in Jerusalem we add one word to our prayer. We say, "Next year in the rebuilt Jerusalem!" And we still have a long way to go before that request is fulfilled in its entirety.'

'But there is more,' continued the Rav with a smile on his face.

“When we beseech God, ‘Next year in Jerusalem,’ we mean that we hope to be there in the fullest sense — in body, soul, and thought. We pray that our situation will be different than it is today, when people dwell in Jerusalem, but are preoccupied with planning trips to America to raise funds.”

Judging from the size of the man’s donation, it was clear that he was especially pleased with the second answer...

(Adapted from “An Angel Among Men” by R. Simcha Raz, translated by R. Moshe Lichtman, pp. 253-254)

from: Aish.com <newsletterserver@aish.com>
date: Tue, Apr 3, 2018 at 8:08 AM
subject: Passover Miracles; Making the Omer Count

ABC's of the Omer

The significance, customs and mechanics of counting the Omer.

by Rabbi Shraga Simmons

What is the Omer?

In the days of the Holy Temple, the Jewish people would bring a barley offering on the second day of Passover (Leviticus 23:10). This was called the "Omer" (literally, "sheaf") and in practical terms would permit the consumption of recently-harvested grains.

Starting on the second day of Passover, the Torah (Leviticus 23:15) says it is a mitzvah every day to "count the Omer" – the 50 days leading up to Shavuot. This is an important period of growth and introspection, in preparation for the holiday of Shavuot which arrives 50 days later.

Shavuot is the day that the Jewish people stood at Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, and as such required a seven-week preparation period. The commentators say that we were freed from Egypt only in order to receive the Torah and to fulfill it. Thus we were commanded to count from the second day of Pesach until the day that the Torah was given – to show how greatly we desire the Torah.

How to Count the Omer

The Omer is counted every evening after nightfall (approx. 30 minutes after sunset), which is the start of the Jewish 'day.' (In the synagogue it is counted toward the end of the Maariv service.) If a person neglected to count the Omer one evening, he should count the following daytime, but without a blessing.

To properly 'count the Omer,' you must say both the number of days and the weeks. For example:

On days 1-6, we say only the number of days. For example:

"Today is 4 days of the Omer."

On days which are complete weeks – e.g. 7, 14, 21 – we say as follows, for example:

"Today is 21 days, which is 3 weeks of the Omer."

On all other days, we say, for example:

"Today is 33 days, which is 4 weeks and 5 days of the Omer."

(Since you must recite the blessing before you count, don't mention the count for that night beforehand.)

Before counting, stand and say the following blessing:

BAHEM"H, asher kid'shanu be'mitzvo'sav ve-tzivanu al sefiras ha'omer.

Blessed are You, God, King of the Universe, Who made us holy with His commandments, and commanded us on the counting of the Omer.

The Omer may be counted with a blessing only if both of the following conditions have been met:

you count the Omer during the evening, and

you have not missed counting any of the days so far

This means to say that if a person neglected to count the Omer for an entire day and did not recall until the following evening, he should continue counting on subsequent days – but without a blessing.

Why can't you "continue counting with a blessing" if you miss counting one day?

The reason is because regarding the Omer, the Torah writes: "Seven weeks, they shall be complete" (Leviticus 23:15). Thus according to many authorities, if one missed counting any day, the 7-week period can no longer be considered 'complete'.

Restrictions During the Omer

The Talmud tells us that Rabbi Akiva had 24,000 students who tragically died during the Omer period, because they did not treat each other with sufficient respect. Therefore, for the 33 days from Passover until Lag B'Omer, we observe these signs of mourning:

no weddings

not listening to instrumental music, either live or recorded (vocal music is permitted)

no haircuts or shaving, unless for business purposes

[Note: According to some customs, the 33-day mourning period begins a few weeks later on the first of Iyar, and ends on the third of Sivan.]

48 Ways

Each day of the Omer is related to a different level of the kabbalistic "Sefirot," the emanations through which God interacts with the world. (see: Kabbalah 101) Each of the seven weeks is associated with one of seven Sefirot, and each day within each of the seven weeks is associated also with one of the same seven Sefirot – thus creating 49 permutations. Each day during the Omer, we focus on a different aspect of the Sefirot, with the hopes of attaining spiritual improvement in that specific area.

Specifically, since Rabbi Akiva's students showed a lack of proper respect, during the Omer period we try to look for the best way to treat our family, friends and acquaintances, so that we may make a "tikkun" (spiritual correction) on the mistakes of the past.

The Talmud (Avot 6:5) says that "Torah is acquired through 48 ways." Thus during the weeks leading up to Shavuot, many have the custom to prepare to "receive the Torah" by studying the 48 Ways. One popular method is to learn a lesson each day of Rabbi Noah Weinberg's series, the "48 Ways"; there is both a text and audio version available online.

Lag B'Omer

Lag B'Omer, the 33rd day of the Omer ('Lag' has a numerical value of 33), marks the date of death of one of the greatest Talmudic sages, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai. This is a day of great celebration, because tradition says that on his death bed Rabbi Shimon revealed the secrets of the Zohar, the primary book of Jewish mysticism (kabbalah).

For centuries, Lag B'Omer has been a day of pilgrimage to the tomb of Rabbi Shimon in the Galilee town of Meiron. In one day, an estimated 250,000 Jews visit Meiron – dancing, praying, and celebrating the wonderful spiritual gifts that Rabbi Shimon bequeathed to us. Many people camp out for days beforehand in anticipation.

To celebrate Lag B'Omer, Jews from around Israel light bonfires, to commemorate the great mystical illuminations that Rabbi Shimon revealed. For weeks before, Israeli children scavenge wood to arrange as impressive sculptures – often 20 and 30 feet high. Great public celebrations are held and the wood towers are burned on Lag B'Omer.

<http://www.ok.org/article/last-day-pesach-called-acharon-shel-pesach/>

Why Is The Last Day Of Pesach Called Acharon Shel Pesach?

by Rabbi Chaim Fogelman

We don't find any other Yom Tov which has a special name denoting the last day – there's no Acharon shel Sukkos or Acharon shel Shavuot.

The prophet Yirmiyahu says, “Therefore, behold, days are coming, says the L-rd, when it will no longer be said, As the L-rd lives who brought Israel up from the land of Egypt.” (Yirmiyahu 16:14)

We call the final day of Pesach “acharon” (the last) because we demonstrate our faith that this Pesach will be the last Pesach in exile. When Moshiach comes, we won't celebrate Pesach as we do now, which is why we refer specifically to the last day as the Final Day of Pesach.

It's a known fact, as Tosfos explains, that the Jews went in to the sea and came out on the same side, like a big half circle, which means that the outer edge of people walked more than the inner side. This is compared to those that are destined to work long and hard to make a living, while others have seem to attain parnossa much faster and easier.

At the splitting of the sea, the Satan said to Hashem, "Why save them (the Jews)? They served idols and they (the Egyptians) served idols. It's not worth it to save them." But Hashem didn't listen and saved the Jews anyway, and when the Satan says, "Don't give that Jew a livelihood; he is not worthy," Hashem doesn't listen and give him his sustenance anyway. Finally, just like the splitting of the sea happened suddenly, when the Jews felt like there was no hope, so too, Hashem suddenly helps with one's livelihood just when it seems that things can't get more desperate.

Thanks to hamelaket@gmail.com for the following divrei torah:

**Rav Shlomo Aviner Shlit" a
Halachic Rulings of Ha-Rav Avi Ronski ztz"l:
Holy & Heroic**

It is with great sadness that we acknowledge the passing of Ha-Rav Avichai Brigadier General Ronski: graduate of our Yeshiva, Ra"m in our Yeshiva, Rosh Yeshiva in Itamar, Chief Rabbi of Tzahal, and served in many elite units in Tzahal including as a high-ranking officer.

Rav Ronski's view of a military Rabbi was not to simply provide religious services and then return to an air-conditioned office, but to serve as a spiritual guide for the soldiers during training and battle. Rav Ronski - based on the vision of Ha-Rav Shlomo Goren - said that a military Rabbi must also have been a combat soldier.

Rav Ronski also authored 4 volumes of Teshuvot, "Ke-Chitzim Be-Yad Gibor", on military Halachot.

Here are a few Teshuvot of Rav Aviner which mention Rav Ronski's book:

Ambush on Shabbat

Q: If a soldier goes out of an ambush on Shabbat or returns from an ambush on Shabbat, is it permissible for him to take personal items with him?

A: It is permissible to take food which will contribute to his alertness. There is a dispute regarding non-essential items. The Chafetz Chaim is lenient in his book "Machane Yisrael" (see Ke-Chitzim Be-Yad of Ha-Rav Avichai Ronski, former Chief Rabbi of Tzahal, Volume 2 pp. 36-37, who permits it. And Kishrei Milchama of Ha-Rav Colonel Ayal Krim, head of the Halachah Department of Tzahal, Volume 4 pp. 86-90).

Cohain in Maarat Ha-Machpelah

Q: Is it permissible for a Cohain to enter Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah?

A: There is a halachic dispute about whether or not the graves of the righteous are impure. If the graves of the righteous are not impure, then it would be permissible for Cohanim to enter Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah, Kever Rachel, the grave of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, et al. While some do permit this, most authorities rule that the graves of the righteous are impure and it is therefore forbidden for Cohanim to enter. It is not permissible however, to give lashes to someone who does enter, since there are those who permit it. Some authorities also explain that Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah is built so that the lower structure, where the graves are located, is covered and detached from the building. Much has been written about this issue. I do not know much about this, though, since I am a Cohain and have never been inside Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah. Maran Ha-Rav Kook did not visit the graves of the righteous in general since he was a Cohain (Le-Sheloshah Be-Elul vol. 1, p. 76) and accordingly did not enter Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah. I am not more righteous than Maran Ha-Rav Kook, so I also do not enter..

The same question applies to Kever Rachel. Even according to the opinion that the graves of the righteous are impure, some say that the building was made in a way to make it permissible for Cohanim to enter. Ha-Rav Mordechai Eliyahu relates that he once told our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, that it is written in the book "Kuntres Yechei'eli" that it is permissible for Cohanim to enter Kever Rachel. Our Rabbi asked him: what do people say there? He answered: they read the verses about our mother Rachel. Our Rabbi travelled there, but only went as far as the door. When he returned, Ha-Rav Eliyahu asked him: why didn't you enter? He answered: My father did not enter, therefore I did not enter" (Parashah Sheet "Kol Tzofa'ich #279. See also Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah - Eretz Yisrael p. 142 note 1 that after the Six-Day War, the students of our Rabbi organized a trip to the liberated areas in the Shomron. One of the places they visited was Kever Yosef. The students entered, but our Rabbi remained outside, because he was a Cohain). Again, Maran Ha-Rav Kook did not enter Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah, so I do not.

In the book "Ke-Chitzim Be-Yad Giborim" (vol. 3, p. 108), Ha-Rav Avichai Ronski, the former Chief Rabbi of Tzahal, was asked: is it permissible for a soldier who is a Cohain to enter Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah for a tour, in order to learn about the place in the event that there is a terrorist attack there and his unit needs to take action? Ha-Rav Ronski answers that it is permissible for three reasons: 1. It is obvious and clear that the security apparatus which would be sent on such a mission must train for it properly. 2. In general, it is not clear that the graves of our forefathers are directly located under the floor of the prayer halls, and even if they are located there, it is possible that the impurity does not break out and spread upward since it there may be hollow spaces larger than a "tefach" (handbreath – 7.6 cm-9.6 cm) which separate the floor from the graves. 3. There are Rishonim (Rabbis of the Middle Ages) who ruled that the graves of the righteous do not cause impurity, and Ha-Rav Mordechai Eliyahu permits Cohanim to enter Ma'arat Ha-Machpelah and Kever Rachel. Even though the majority of authorities prohibit entering, it is possible to add this lenient opinion to the other reasons that permit it. Ha-Rav Aviner writes in his comments to this book that it is important to know that the first reason is the main one, and the second and third reasons are only additional minority positions which can be added to permit it. And we must point this out so that people do not learn that there is an all-encompassing heter to enter.

Shehechyanu on F-35 Stealth Fighter Jets

Q: With Hashem's kindnesses, the State of Israel received F-35 Stealth Fighter jets. Should the blessing of Shehechyanu be recited, or is it not recited because the fighter plane is a weapon of war? If it should be recited, who recites the blessing?

A: War indeed causes distress, but for now we are obligated to wage war. The Rambam calls one of the books in the Mishneh Torah Hilchot Melachim U-Milchamot - Laws of Kings and Wars.. The censored edition calls this book "Laws of Kings and Their Wars", as if the Nation of Israel only waged wars in the past but no longer does so. This is not true. There is no free nation without war. To our great distress, we therefore must wage war, but we can take pride in the power of the deterrence of Tzahal. How fortunate are we to have merited these planes!

Regarding which blessing to recite: the blessing of "Shehechyanu" is recited over an object acquired by one person, while the blessing of "Ha-Tov Ve-Ha-Meitiv" is recited over an object acquired for the benefit of more than one person: Hashem is good to me and does good for others)Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 223:2). In this case, the Stealth Fighter jets are obviously for the benefit of the entire Nation of Israel!

Many years ago, I wrote a long Teshuvah that one should recite such a blessing over the acquisition of a pistol (in this case "Shehechyanu". See Shut She'eilat Shlomo 3:87). This is true all the more for the F-35 jets! There were Gedolei Yisrael who disagreed with my Teshuvah on the pistol for various reasons, including that it is a weapon of destruction. These

included the former Chief Rabbi of Tzahal, Ha-Rav Brigadier General Avi Ronski, Ha-Rav Dov Lior, Ha-Rav Ovadiah Yosef and Ha-Rav David Cohen, Ra"m in our Yeshiva (brought in the book "Ke-Chitzim Be-Yad Gibor Vol. 1, pp. 131-133). Perhaps the four Rabbis who disagreed with me regarding the blessing over a pistol would agree, however, regarding a fighter plane. In any event, I discussed this issue with the current Chief Rabbi of Tzahal, Ha-Rav Brigadier General Ayal Krim, and he agrees that the blessing of "Ha-Tov Ve-Ha-Meitiv" should be recited over the fighter jets. And as the Torah says: And come to the Chief Rabbi of Tzahal who will be in your days (play on the verse "Come to the judge who will be in your days" - Devarim 17:9), and the Chief Rabbi of Tzahal is the halachic authority of the army.

The blessing should be recited by the head of the Israeli Air Force.

And we can add (somewhat in jest) that if the head of the Air Force wants to be strict, and follow all of the opinions, he can buy a new shirt to be worn by a few people and recite the blessing "Ha-Tov Ve-Ha-Meitiv" over the \$25 shirt while also having the 90 Million Dollar F-35 Stealth Fighter jet in mind... This reminds us of the story that when Ha-Rav Shlomo Goren was Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv, he recited Shehechyanu on the night of Yom Ha-Atzmaut in Shul as was his opinion. One of the people there questioned it, and Rav Goren waved his tie, as if to say that he was wearing a new tie, and so the blessing was on it.. After the davening, Rav Goren scolded the man: It is obvious to you that one says Shehechyanu on a new tie, but not on a new State?!

May the soul of Ha-Rav Avichai Brigadier General Ronski remain bound up with the souls of the all other holy and heroic souls!

**FOR ISRAEL –
ravkooktorah.org**

Shemini: Rabbi Yehudah and the Calf

"Of all the animals in the world, these are the ones that you may eat..."
(Lev. 11:2)

Rabbi Yehudah's Mistake

For thirteen years, Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi, the famed redactor of the Mishnah, suffered from terrible pains. The Talmud (Baba Metziah 85b) traces his suffering back to the following incident:

One day, a calf was led to slaughter. The animal, sensing what was about to take place, fled to Rabbi Yehudah. It hung its head on the corner of his garment and wept.

The rabbi told the calf: "Go! You were created for this purpose."

It was decreed in Heaven: since Rabbi Yehudah failed to show compassion to the calf, the rabbi should suffer from afflictions. (Rabbi Yehudah was only healed many years later, when he convinced his maidservant not to harm small rodents she discovered in the house.)

Why was the rabbi punished so severely for showing insensitivity to the calf? Permission to Eat Meat

"It is an overall moral deficiency in humanity," Rav Kook wrote, "when we are unable to maintain the proper and lofty emotion - [a natural aversion] to taking the life of a living creature for our needs and pleasures."

Moreover, Rabbi Yehudah was wrong. Animals were not created just to be slaughtered.

Most prohibitions are constant; they are forbidden for all times. That, however, is not the true with regard to eating meat. In this case, we may delineate four distinct stages in the moral development of humanity.

1. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were not allowed to kill animals for food. That lofty state of vegetarianism, Rav Kook wrote, is in fact the natural and correct order of the world.

2. After the Flood, in the time of Noah, eating meat was permitted (Sanhedrin 59b). This change was for the physical and moral betterment of humanity.

Rabbi Yosef Albo (c. 1380-1444) explained that the original prohibition to eat meat led indirectly to the murder of humans. People concluded that "The fate of human beings is like that of the animals... All have the same spirit; humans have no advantage over animals" (Ecc. 3:19). God permitted the consumption of meat in order to highlight the difference between killing a human being and killing an animal (Sefer Ha-Ikarim 3:16).

Blurring the distinction between human and animal life impedes humanity's moral and spiritual development. A sense of commonality with the animals begets legitimization for a lawless, uncontrolled lifestyle and animalistic conduct.

3. With the Torah's revelation at Sinai, a third stage commenced. The laws of kashrut provide steps that minimized the negative repercussions of consuming meat.

The Torah prohibited predatory animals and birds of prey due to the concern that we may be influenced by their violent traits, by eating them and by frequent contact with them (the unavoidable result of raising them for food). And the laws of shehitah are meant to ensure that death will be swift and reduce the animal's anguish.

4. There will be a future era, Rav Kook wrote, when humanity will return to the lofty state of the Garden of Eden. Eating meat will be forbidden once again. This is the wonderful vision described by the prophets:

"The cow will graze with the bear, their young will lie down together; and the lion will eat straw like cattle... They will neither harm nor destroy on all My holy mount." (Isaiah 11:6-9)

In this future world, the Kabbalists wrote, the animals will be elevated to a higher state; and they will no longer serve as food for humans.

Rabbi Yehudah's response to the calf was wrong. The slaughterhouse is not the calf's ultimate destiny. On the contrary, as the rabbi remarked to his maidservant thirteen years later, "God's compassion extends to all of His creations" (Psalms 145:9).

(Adapted from Afikim BaNegev, chapter 6.)

See also: Shemini: Immersion in Water

"Shabbat Shalom" - Last Day Pesach 5778
Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

Efrat, Israel — "...God made the people take a roundabout path, by way of the desert..." [Ex. 13:18].

Having observed the Passover Seder just one week ago, we would do well to reflect back on that experience now in order to glean new insights for everyday life. For example, why did we recline while eating matzah? In what I believe is a teaching that captures the essence of Passover, our Sages state that on Passover Eve, "...even a pauper should not eat until he reclines, and he should be given not less than four glasses of wine, even if he is so poor that he eats by means of the community charitable fund" [Mishna, Pesachim 10:1].

One night a year, even the destitute throw off the shackles of their misery and feel as if they, too, have been freed from Egypt. They, too, celebrate this festival, which speaks of a nation of slaves transformed into a free people. And all of us on the communal 'tzedaka committee' must make sure that every last Jew, no matter how poor he or she may be, shall be given the opportunity to recline like the most free of people.

Fascinatingly, our Mishna's concern that even the poorest recline is based on a Midrashic comment to a verse in Exodus, where we read that when Pharaoh finally lets the Israelites go, "...God made the people take a roundabout path, by way of the desert..." [Ex. 13:18].

The Hebrew word for 'being made to take a roundabout path', 'vayasev,' has, curiously enough, the same root of the Hebrew word 'reclining' (yesev). The Torah explains that God takes the Israelites on a roundabout path because taking the most direct route would have caused the Hebrews to pass through land of the Philistines. This act could have provoked an aggressive nation who might very well have attacked and frightened the Israelites into retreat.

Despite having witnessed the fall of the Egyptian empire, the miracles of the Ten Plagues and the splitting of the Reed Sea, the Israelites are still frightened to wage war. God knows that they are still slaves at heart. One of the manifold tragedies of slavery is the psychological impact on the victim whereby he believes himself to be worthless and incapable of fighting for his rights.

Indeed, Moses learns this lesson after he slays an Egyptian taskmaster for beating an Israelite, an act he had probably hoped would incite and inspire the Hebrew slaves to rise up against their captors and demand their freedom. The very next day, when he tries to break up a fight between two Hebrews, they taunt him for having killed the Egyptian. Instead of hailing Moses as a hero who risked his own life to save a fellow Jew, they deride him. Slavery corrupts captor and captive alike.

If power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely, then powerlessness corrupts most of all. A magnificent post-Holocaust Australian play, "The Edge of Night," has a former Kapo declare: "There were no heroes in Auschwitz; there were only those who were murdered and those who survived."

A slave feels helpless: uncertain of his ability to obtain food, he becomes almost obsessed with the desire for a piece of bread – almost at any cost. From this perspective, the desert possesses not only a stark landscape, but also a stark moral message concerning the transformation of an enslaved Hebrew into a freed Hebrew.

The manna, which descended daily from heaven, was intended to change the labor camp mentality of greedy individuals in Egypt into a nation in which "...the one who had taken more did not have any extra, and the one who had taken less did not have too little. They gathered exactly enough for each one to eat..." [ibid., 16:17-18].

The Haggadah begins, "This is the bread of affliction that our ancestors ate in the Land of Egypt. Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat; whoever is in need, let him come and join celebrating the Passover offering." This is more than just generous hospitality; it is fundamental to Jewish freedom; the transition from a frightened, selfish and egocentric mentality of keeping the food for oneself into a free and giving mode of sharing with those less fortunate.

Now we understand clearly why the Midrash connects 'reclining' with a 'roundabout' path. Far beyond use of the same root, the very purpose of this path is intended to purge the state of mind that still thinks like a slave, frightened not only of Philistines, but of another mouth who one fears is always waiting to take away the little bit that one has. Therefore, it is when we give so that others, too, may have and thus feel free, that we demonstrate in a most profound way that we are no longer slaves, but are truly free. Shabbat Shalom and Chag Sameach!

We look to our past in order to gain inspiration for our present and our future.

What will we be doing on the day after Pesach?

The day immediately following Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot is given a term – it's called Isru Chag. That term is taken from the Hallel, Psalm 118, where we declare, "isru chag ba'avotim ad karnot hamizbei'ach" – "Let us bind the festive offering with cords, to the corners of the alter", suggesting that we do not want the festival to pass. We want to hold on to it for as long as possible. In this spirit, the Gemara in Masechet sukka (daf mem hey amud bet) tells us that by keeping Isru Chag, it is as if we are building an altar and making a sacrifice upon it. The great sixteenth century Kabbalistic Sage, the Ari Hakadosh, taught that by keeping Isru Chag, we are taking the spiritual light of Pesach and enabling it to continue into following year.

In Sephardi circles, the festival of Mimouna is kept with beautiful and lovely customs. I believe that everything relating to Isru Chag inspires us to concentrate on follow-up, because whenever we have an event – an experience of great significance – it is what follows that will make all the difference.

In drawing on our experiences of Pesach, I believe that amongst all the beautiful lessons contained therein, there is one prime lesson: during Pesach we look to our past in order to gain inspiration for our present and our future.

The Talmud tells a story of a man who was on his way to a destination he hadn't previously visited – he arrived at a crossroads and alas, the wind had blown down the signpost. He didn't know whether to go right, left or straight and he sat on the ground to bemoan his fate. Then suddenly a thought crossed his mind – he did know what one of the directions was – he knew where he had come from. He ran up to the signpost and placed it in the ground, with the arrow pointing in the direction of his point of origin, and from this, he could work out which way to go.

Our Sages tell us that from here we learn that it is only when you know where you are coming from that you can know where you are going to. That is the prime message of Pesach – 'Zecher letziat Mitzrayim' – that we should remember our Exodus from Egypt and that we should draw on the lessons of our past. We are rooted in Jewish history and as a result, we can gain inspiration for the sake of our Jewish present and future.

So that is what we should do on the day after Pesach. We should look to our past for the sake of our future.

Chag Sameach

www.israelnationalnews.com © Arutz Sheva

torahweb.org

Rabbi Eliakim Koenigsberg

The Connection Between Yetzias Mitzrayim and Kriyas Yam Suf

Toward the end of the Maggid section of the haggadah, we mention a dispute among the Tannaim as to how many plagues the Mitzrim suffered at the Yam Suf. What does this have to do with the mitzvah of retelling the story of yetzias Mitzrayim? In fact, the Rambam omits this section in his version of the haggadah. Rav Soloveitchik explained that this follows the Rambam's opinion (Hilchos Chametz U'Matzah 7:1) that on the night of the seder we are commanded to recount only the miracles that Klal Yisrael experienced in Mitzrayim and while leaving Mitzrayim, but not the miracles that occurred after yetzias Mitzrayim. Apparently, the author of the haggadah disagrees. He understands that even the miracles at the splitting of the sea are relevant to sippur yetzias Mitzrayim.

The Magen Avraham (67:1) takes this idea even further. He claims that one can fulfill the daily obligation to remember yetzias Mitzrayim by reciting the shiras hayam, the song that Klal Yisrael sang after the splitting of the sea.

חדשות ערוך 7

Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis 4/2/2018, ז' בניסן תשע"ח, "What will we be doing the day after Pesach?"

Both the Chasam Sofer and Rav Akiva Eiger (in their glosses to the Shulchan Aruch there) are troubled by this statement. After all, the possuk explicitly states that one is required to remember "the day that you left Mitzrayim (Devarim 16:3)" which implies that simply reciting the shiras hayam is insufficient. How can the Magen Avraham claim that just by mentioning the splitting of the sea one can fulfill the daily mitzvah of zechiras yetzias Mitzrayim?

The Talmud Yerushalmi (Pesachim 10:6) comments that although there is an obligation to sing shirah whenever Hakadosh Boruch Hu performs miracles for Klal Yisrael, nevertheless Klal Yisrael did not sing shirah when they left Mitzrayim because that was still only the beginning of their redemption. They did not experience a complete redemption until the splitting of the sea. Similarly, Rabbenu Bachya (Vaeira 6:6) writes that the phrase, "And I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgements" is a reference to kriyas Yam Suf since that is when Klal Yisrael achieved a complete redemption.

This idea is also hinted to in the fact that we do not recite a full Hallel nor do we say the bracha of shehechyanu on the seventh day of Pesach. It is quite different from Shemini Atzeres, the last day of Sukkos, which is "a holiday of its own." (Sukkah 47a) Some explain that we do not recite a full hallel on the seventh day of Pesach because it would be inappropriate to sing a complete shirah for the splitting of the sea since that miracle also caused the drowning of the Mitzrim, and the possuk says, "When your enemy falls, do not rejoice (Mishlei 24:17)." But the Gemara (Arachin 10a) suggests a different reason why we do not recite a full Hallel on the last day of Pesach, and that is because it has no special korban musaf. Since its korban is the same as that of the first day of Pesach, it is not considered an independent yom tov, so it does not get a full Hallel of its own, and for the same reason we do not say the bracha of shehechyanu. These halachos highlight the idea that the seventh day of Pesach, which commemorates the splitting of the sea, is not considered a separate celebration. But rather, it is viewed as the culmination of the celebration of yetzias Mitzrayim since kriyas Yam Suf was the time when Klal Yisrael achieved a full redemption.

What happened at the Yam Suf that made the redemption of Klal Yisrael complete? Rabbeinu Bachya explains that until the Mitzrim were drowned at the sea, Klal Yisrael were concerned that their former masters would chase after them and enslave them once again. But after the Mitzrim were eliminated at the Yam Suf, Klal Yisrael finally felt a complete sense of freedom since they no longer feared that they would be forced to return to Mitzrayim.

The Vilna Gaon (quoted in Kol Eliyahu, Parshas Bo) adds that the ge'ulah was not complete until kriyas Yam Suf when the Mitzrim were punished in the water, middah k'neged middah, in return for the evil they perpetrated against Klal Yisrael when they decreed that every Jewish newborn male child should be thrown into the river. The Netziv (Ha'amek Davar, Shemos 14:31) suggests that a similar idea is alluded to by the possuk, "And Klal Yisrael saw the great hand that Hashem used against Mitzrayim, and the people feared Hashem." This refers to how Hakadosh Boruch Hu meted out precise punishments for each and every Egyptian, corresponding to the pain and suffering that each one inflicted on the Jewish people in Mitzrayim. Rashi (Shemos 15:5) quotes the Midrash that the most wicked of the Egyptians were tossed around in the Yam Suf like straw, the average ones fell like stones, and the relatively decent ones sank immediately like lead. Each one received a punishment that was commensurate to his actions against Klal Yisrael.

After kriyas Yam Suf it says, "And they believed in Hashem and Moshe his servant. (Shemos 14:31)" Until then, the people could have deluded themselves into thinking that Moshe Rabbeinu had magically orchestrated the ten plagues and yetzias Mitzrayim. But when the people saw how precise the Divine punishment was, they had complete emunah in Hashem, and they realized that Moshe was only Hashem's agent in bringing about yetzias Mitzrayim.

That is why the redemption was incomplete until kriyas Yam Suf because one of the purposes of yetzias Mitzrayim was to instill in the hearts of Klal Yisrael a strong sense of emunah in the Ribbono Shel Olam. The ten plagues were designed to strengthen Klal Yisrael's belief in the existence of Hashem, Divine providence and omnipotence, and the concept of reward and punishment (see Maharal, Gur Aryeh, Vaeira 9:14). At the Yam Suf, this process reached its climax when Klal Yisrael saw the element of middah k'neged middah in the punishment of the Mitzrim. At that moment, they totally believed in Hashem and His power, and they appreciated His sense of justice. That was when Klal Yisrael achieved a complete redemption. (see Yarei'ach L'Moadim 67, for further elaboration)

It is no wonder that the author of our version of the haggadah includes the miracles of kriyas Yam Suf in the text of the haggadah, because it was only at the Yam Suf that one of the primary goals of yetzias Mitzrayim - namely developing a complete trust in the Ribbono Shel Olam - was finally achieved. This perhaps is also why the Magen Avraham rules that if one recites the shiras hayam he has fulfilled his daily obligation to remember yetzias Mitzrayim, because the miracles of kriyas Yam Suf, which are described in the shirah, were the catalyst that completed the process of yetzias Mitzrayim.

Copyright © 2018 by TorahWeb.org.